

Washington, DC □ Congresswoman Linda Sánchez recently met with local “Celebration Ambassadors” as part of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network’s “Celebration on the Hill” event.

The local delegation members, who are all cancer survivors or advocates and live in the 39th Congressional District, visited Washington to recognize Congresswoman Sánchez for her commitment to cancer research initiatives and to ask for her continued support.

Eight constituents □ Linda Curtiss, Whittier; Anita Gaytan, Whittier; Diane Masseth-Jones, Lakewood; Maria Maynes, South Gate; Jack Miranda, La Mirada; Joann Sarachman, Whittier; Monica Walker, La Mirada; and Gloria Winfree, Los Angeles □ traveled to Washington with 4,000 other Celebration Ambassadors from across the country to participate in the event. They shared with Congresswoman Sánchez their personal stories of cancer survival and loss, as well as their hopes for legislation that will support the development of improved treatment and prevention options.

“Cancer is a vicious disease that has darkened all of our lives,” said Congresswoman Sánchez, a member of the Congressional Cancer Caucus. “I am inspired by the courage and dedication of our Celebration Ambassadors to helping others beat cancer, both at home and here in Washington.”

The Celebration Ambassadors requested that the congresswoman continue her support for the renewal of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Act, of which Congresswoman Sánchez is a co-sponsor. They also advocated for a boost in federal funding for cancer research and treatment programs.

Illustrating the importance of cancer research, Ms. Walker said that her oncologist decided to change her treatment medications after reading the latest research in a medical journal report. The report discovered that the particular medications she had previously used, when taken in combination, actually limited their ability to treat the cancer.

“Without that research, I’d still be using those treatments today,” said Ms. Walker, who was diagnosed with breast cancer two years ago at age 28.

Linda Curtiss presented Congresswoman Sánchez with a memorial pen for making the Congressional Cancer Promise, pledging her support for the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by 2015.

“She has been a real advocate for us, keeping the funding flowing,” said Ms. Curtiss. “Hopefully, by 2015, the pain and suffering of cancer victims won’t be much of a problem.”

More than 10,000 cancer patients, survivors, families, and friends attended the Celebration on the Hill 2006. The event took place Sept. 19-20, 2006 on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Of the supporters, nearly 4,000 people were selected to serve as Celebration Ambassadors.

OVERHEARD AT AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY CELEBRATION ON THE HILL

***Celebration Ambassadors □ local cancer survivors and Advocates □ comment on research advocacy mission to Washington DC.

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Each of the Celebration Ambassadors has supported other cancer patients through the physical and emotional effects caused by the disease and its often painful treatments.

Gloria Winfree, Los Angeles

"I'm determined to be available to anyone with this terrible disease," said Gloria Winfree (Los Angeles), who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1980, four months after she lost her mother to colon cancer. "It doesn't matter who you are. You can call me, and I will pray with you."

Joann Sarachman, Whittier

"I was really moved by how many children with cancer I saw here," said Joann Sarachman (Whittier). "It really put this problem into perspective. We need to find a way to prevent this disease from hurting kids." "I'm determined to be available to anyone with this terrible disease," said Gloria Winfree (Los Angeles), who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1980, four months after she lost her mother to colon cancer. "It doesn't matter who you are. You can call me, and I will pray with you."

Jack Miranda, La Mirada

"I am a 12-year cancer survivor," said Jack Miranda (La Mirada). "And I lost my son to a brain tumor 11 years ago. That was 4033 days ago. Losing my son made [my wife and me] passionate about finding a cure and embracing others that are suffering."